Workshop
Southern Europe in Crisis: A Comparative Perspective

29-30 May 2017, European University Institute
Organized by Reto Bürgisser (EUI) and Guillem Vidal (EUI)
Sponsor: Prof. Hanspeter Kriesi (EUI)

Outline

In the Great Transformation, Karl Polanyi suggested that there are critical periods when ‘time expands’. A detailed analysis of these periods is valuable to understand the long-lasting influence economic shocks exert on the social and political environment. By all accounts, time has expanded in Southern Europe in the shadow of the Great Recession. The multiple crises that unfolded after the fall of Lehman Brothers in 2008 not only constitute a breaking point in several aspects of the cultural, economic and political life but also highlight long-term structural adversities of these countries (i.e. Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain).

The workshop aims to reflect on the causes and consequences of the political, social and economic crises in comparative perspective by bringing together researchers from the fields of comparative politics, political behaviour and political economy. We are interested in two types of research: research that focuses on the causes and/or the immediate consequences of the Great Recession, and research that examines the long-term political, social and economic development of this region.

More specifically, how did political conflict and party competition dynamics change and what are the links to the protest arena? Who are the driving forces (or lack thereof) behind these transformations and whom do they represent? How did austerity policies impact on the social fabric of these countries and what have been the economic and social policy responses of governments? Finally, how does the experience of Southern Europe compare to that of North-Western Europe or Central and Eastern Europe?

The principle goal of this two-day workshop is to engage with different angles on the crisis in Southern Europe. Beyond the case study in question, the purpose is to advance our understanding of the political consequences of economic and political crisis more generally as well as to expand on the methodological perspectives.

The workshop will consist of guest lectures by Donatella della Porta (Scuola Normale Superiore, SNS), Maurizio Ferrera (University of Milan) and José Fernández-Albertos (Spanish National Research Council, CSIC) and paper presentations by PhD researchers.

EUI researchers can apply for credits (10) upon participation, either as paper presenter or discussant. If you are interesting in presenting your research, please write to organizers by Friday, 24 February 2017 the latest.